

Students take time out for books

By **MOLLY WILLIAMSON**
State Journal Staff Writer

Matthew Anderson lay on a blue towel Friday on the floor of Good Shepherd School's gymnasium with his head on his arm, engrossed in a book.

At first glance, the third-grader appeared to be sleeping. However, he was really riveted by *Batman: Knightfall and Beyond*.

"The characters are doing good in the story, and Batman is destroying the enemy," Matthew said.

Though Matthew didn't notice, all around him his schoolmates and teachers were poring over newspapers, magazines and books as part of Scholastic Books Read for 2006: One World Reading Together. The day encouraged

Westridge students take part in reading day, A5

schools throughout the world to drop everything for 2,006 seconds, roughly a half hour, and read — students, administrators and staff.

"There is nothing more powerful than children understanding the importance of reading by seeing adults read," said Peyton Nunley, fifth-grade teacher. "That's what I love about the drop everything and read program. Everyone drops everything and reads what they love for a set amount of time every day."

For eighth-graders Tricia Meyer and Katherine Depenbrock, their guilty pleasure was

Teen People, where they learned about Haylie Duff's many clothes and shoes.

The two read the magazine together during their half hour, catching up on the latest gossip about teen celebrities.

They also read about a girl who sought and found her biological mother.

"It is kind of cool because she wants to get back with her mom and she is not mad at her mom for giving her up for adoption," Meyer said.

Also reading together were first-graders Katelyn Rahrig and Skyler Sudduth, though admittedly they were itching for the reading to end so they could take gym class and eat their snack.

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"I am really hungry," Katelyn said.

To tide themselves over until snack time, the girls read aloud to each other from Dr. Seuss books such as *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut Tight* and from another book called *The Cave*.

"It is better to read out loud because we like to and we're best friends," Katelyn said.

Plus, she liked having everyone reading in the same room.

"I like having all of my friends all around me," she said.

Third-grader Maggie Pelletier liked having all the comforts of home during her reading time. She wrapped up in a blanket and rested her head on a pillow as she read *Black Beauty*.

"I think we should do more of this," Maggie said of the reading

program. "When you read, it helps you learn and it helps you with other subjects, too. I think everyone is having a really good time. It is really quiet and peaceful."

Assistant Principal Stephanie Sims said the students really got into the event.

"It is cool to think how many people were all reading at the same time," Sims said.